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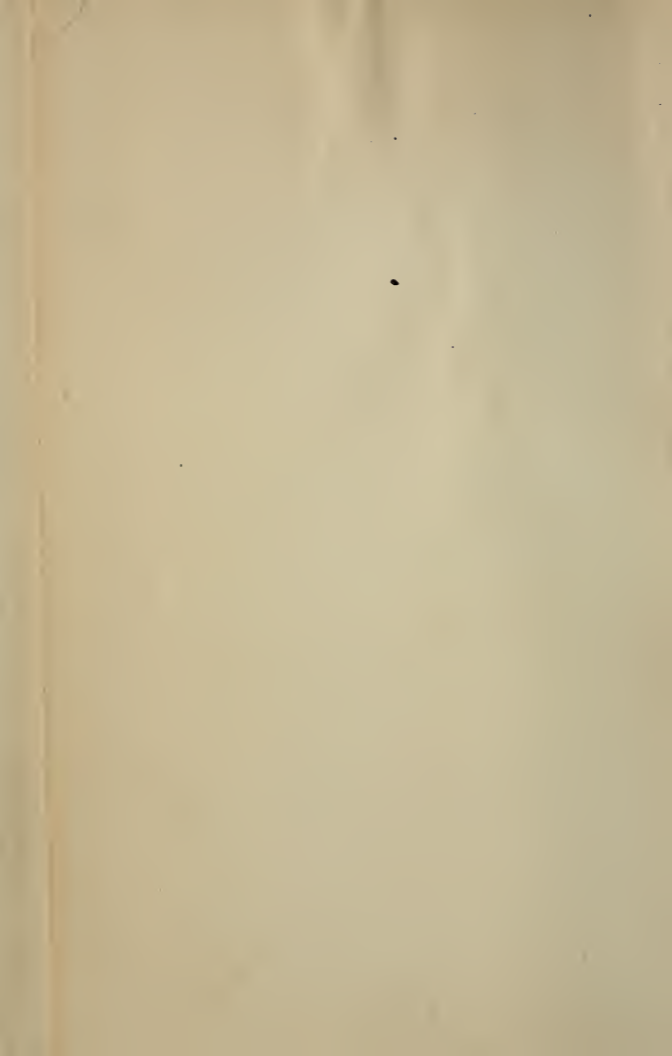


Faithful Unto Death.



1914

(Horstmann)
ZHGC





Faithful Unto Death.

A WORD OF ADMONITION TO THE

CONFIRMED YOUTH

— OF THE —

EVANGELICAL CHURCH,

— BY —

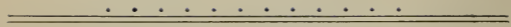
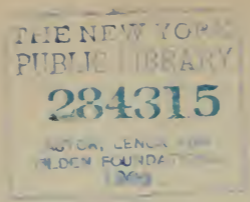
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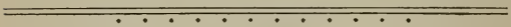
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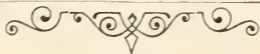


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To the memory of his beloved parents, the blessing of whose Christian example and precepts he realizes more fully as the years pass by, this little volume is fondly dedicated by

The Author.



Certificate of Confirmation.

This certifies, that.....

born 19.....,

has been confirmed and admitted into
full membership of the Evangelical
Church (Evangelical Synod of North

America) by.....
(Name of Church.)

Church at.....
(Location of Church.)

on..... 19.....
(Date.)

Memorial Verse:.....

Pastor.

☞ PREFACE. ☞

“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” Deut. vi. 6. 7.

This divine injunction no doubt, more than anything else, has been the means of retaining that unique moral and religious character which distinguished the Hebrew wherever found from any other people on the face of the earth. In obedience to this command the Hebrew father was ever diligent to teach his children the way of the Lord. He loved to linger over the pages of his nation's history and to dwell upon the memorable deeds of its heroes. He availed himself of every opportunity to talk to his children of the Law of God and His wonderful dealings with Israel. When he sat in his house or walked by the way, when he lay down to rest or when he arose to labor, the one inexhaustible theme always was the Law of God and the wondrous ways of Jehovah. Thus the religious impressions were indelibly stamped upon the young mind and heart.

In the New Dispensation, where Calvary is substituted for Sinai and the Gospel of Grace is proclaimed for the redemption of them that are under the law that they might receive the adoption of sons, childhood is invested with a new meaning and the instruction of children in the way of salvation gains a new and sacred significance. In the baptismal vow the parents assume the duty to teach their children the blessed truths of the Gospel. They promise to watch over the education of their children that they be not led astray; to direct their youthful minds to the Holy Scriptures and their feet to the sanctuary; to restrain them from evil associates and habits, and, as much as in them lieth to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It is in accordance with this duty that many churches have retained the custom of giving their children a special course of religious instruction previous to their reception into the church by the rite of confirmation.

The desirability of placing a guide, or handbook, into the hands of the confirmed youth has ever been felt by pastors and such parents who were solicitous for the spiritual welfare of their children. Books of this kind have been published in the German language and have been a means of great blessing to many young people. The need of a similar book in the English language has become apparent, and in response to the urgent requests of many pastors and parents this little volume has been prepared.

In the unfolding of the subject the historical and inductive method has been chosen as the one

most interesting and convincing. Examples of Christian experience are given—in connection with Bible truths—and sketches from life are frequently interwoven because of their freshness. The author has never lost sight of the fact, that he was writing for young people with the view of bringing them nearer to their Master and of strengthening the sacred ties that unite them in spiritual fellowship with their church.

We ask for this little volume a kind reception on the part of pastors and parents, and would offer it as a suitable gift to young people generally and especially in memory of the day of confirmation. May it be found worthy of a place with other religious literature in Christian homes throughout our land, and may it be the means of retaining its youthful readers faithful to their Lord and Savior unto death.

In behalf of the Literary Committee,

J. U. SCHNEIDER, *Chairman.*





☉ Sowing the Seed. ☉



I.

With the single exception of Jerusalem no other city occupies so important a place in the earliest history of Christianity, as does Antioch, the capital of the Roman province of Syria. True, Antioch could not boast the venerable age of the city of Zion nor was its name associated with sacred memories such as made Jerusalem dear to every Jew from Rome to Babylon; but as if in compensation for these deficiencies the city enjoyed material advantages and resources, which, indeed, Jerusalem had also enjoyed in the days of Solomon, but which had long since become mere memories with her inhabitants. For Antioch, besides being the headquarters for the provincial government, was also the centre of trade between the East and the West. Situated near the mouth of the Orontes, the trading vessels of the Mediterranean naturally drifted into her

harbor, while her proximity to the plains of Mesopotamia made her the most convenient market-place for the products of this fertile region. Antioch was thus a natural gathering place of the nations; upon her streets and in her spacious bazars and warehouses the haughty Roman and the dusky Arab, the swarthy Moor and the Jewish merchant, each with purposes and desires of his own, met and mingled and drove their bargains; as Rome had become Queen of the West, so Antioch was Queen of the East. The apostles of Christ were therefore early attracted by such a vast and promising field for their activity, and in size and importance the church there soon ranked next to that at Jerusalem.

Our story opens in the year 40 A. D. The heat of the day had passed away and the coolness of the early evening had spread over the city, while the streets, only a short time ago nearly deserted, were thronged with people bent upon pleasure or business. By far the busiest scene was at the docks, where ships of every nation, gay with flags and bunting of every color, were anchored with their precious cargoes. Goods of every description lay in huge piles upon the wharf while hundreds of

slaves and laborers hurried to and fro among them. Some were unloading the ships that had recently arrived, transporting their cargoes to the store-rooms near by, others brought packages of every size and color from the khan, or caravansary, close at hand. There were Bedouins in the picturesque dress of the desert, merchants of all nations, sailors in the costumes peculiar to their class and crowds of passengers waiting for their ships to weigh anchor. Everybody seemed to be in a hurry, and the shouting of orders and the inevitable din of so many people made the scene one of noise and confusion. Occasionally there was a lull here and there which offered an opportunity for a short rest or bits of conversation. Near the upper part of the wharf, almost under the massive bridge that spanned the Orontes, several slaves had gathered during one of these pauses. Pointing to a stalwart Ethiopian standing in the doorway of the store-room with others of his color, one of them, a tall angular Hebrew, sneeringly remarked: "Rajah is preaching his new faith again."

"Has he joined the chorus in the temple of Diana?" laughed one of the group.

"Perhaps the dancers of Apollo have made him one of their number," jeered another.

“Let us make him tell us all about it,” proposed a third.

Just then, however, Rajah was called into the warehouse. “Rajah believes in a god that was nailed to a cross,” said Mizrah, for such was the Hebrew’s name. A load of goods brought to the wharf at that moment, to be loaded into one of the vessels cut short the conversation here and the group scattered to their work.

“How did your god come to be nailed to a cross,” said one of them a little later as he met Rajah upon the wharf, “and did he ever get down again?”

Before Rajah could answer a great heavy box that had been insecurely placed upon a pile of other goods came down with a crash, scattering its contents over the wharf. Instantly the overseer was on the spot.

“Which of you knaves placed such a heavy box up so high?” he asked angrily.

“There is the fool!” cried Mizrah pointing to Rajah; “I told him to leave it on the floor, but he would show his muscle.”

“Take that, fool of a slave!” cried the overseer as his whip hissed through the air inflicting an ugly gash upon the bare back of the Ethiopian.

For an instant a fierce light shone in Rajah's eyes as they glared upon the Hebrew, who, fearing for his safety, drew back into the crowd; but as if suddenly remembering something, the Ethiopian's look softened and he turned to resume his labors, while Mizrah, glad of his escape, kept well out of Rajah's reach for the rest of the day.

“Dog of a Hebrew,” said a blue-eyed Teuton giant, “I saw him place that box himself from where it fell. In the land of my fathers he would be banished to the forest for his lying tongue.”

“Why did you not give the lying dog what he deserved,” said another, “you surely were not afraid of him?”

“Come to the wharf below the bridge tomorrow after dark and you shall see,” was Rajah's answer.



II.

Ever since the conquest of Juda by the Syrians many Jews had taken up their residence in Antioch, for, under the powerful patronage of the Syrian kings, that city offered more and greater opportunities of profit in all the trades and walks of life than could Jerusalem or the

other cities of Juda. For this reason thousands of Jews had taken their way northward through the deserts and mountainous countries intervening, and settled in the new land. Many of these had given up every thing that once distinguished them from their heathen neighbors and had become lost among the different races that inhabited Antioch and the surrounding country, Syrians, Greeks, Babylonians and Phenicians, but by far the greater part had at least outwardly maintained the traditions and faith of their ancestors. In order to exercise their faith more freely they had gathered in a certain part of the city, as is customary with the foreign populations of all our great cities even to-day. In this part of Antioch there was at the intersection of two of the principal streets a large open space, paved with broad rough flags and surrounded by booths and bazars of all kinds and sizes. During the earlier part of the day this place was the market for the inhabitants of the Jewish quarter: There the peasants from the surrounding country gathered, their donkeys laden with all kinds of fruits and garden products; traders and venders of every description offered wine, jewelry, birds, cattle, in short everything that

any one might desire, for sale. Later in the day the place became a general gathering place for the Jewish population. In the cool of the evening the people were wont to leave the narrow crooked streets and their low darkened houses and swarm forth to the market place; the gossip of the day was exchanged, important news was discussed and a sort of informal neighborhood meeting held.

On this particular evening the place seemed to be more than usually alive with people and still they came, men and women, by twos and threes from the adjoining streets and by-ways. From one of the more pretentious thoroughfares two persons approached, whose coming seemed to excite the especial interest of the people, and both of them were, indeed, of a striking appearance. The one, tall and well proportioned, was clad in garments that indicated wealth and high social position. Beneath a richly ornamented turban appeared a high forehead, surmounting features of uncommon regularity, whose naturally dignified though benevolent expression was brought out still more by a long flowing well-kept beard. His companion differed from him in almost every particular. He was somewhat smaller, his form was emaciated and angular,

while his face, covered with a short irregular growth of beard, showed plainly the traces of suffering. His dress was that of the humbler classes, an unbleached, undyed blanket crossed over one shoulder and girt around the waist; in his garment there was plainly visible, however, the wide hem and the deep fringe that proclaimed the Pharisee. What was most striking in his appearance was, however, the unusual light that shone from his bright black eyes deeply set under a forehead high and broad and domelike that could conceal none but a master mind. The two companions were alike only in the unmistakable Hebrew countenance and complexion and the thoughtful manner of their conversation.

“The peace of Jehovah be with you, my brethren,” said the taller of the two as he approached.

“The peace of Jehovah be with thee, Joseph,” answered a venerable old man, “we are glad to see thee safely returned.”

Joseph led his companion, who seemed to be a stranger, toward the entrance of one of the nearby bazars. From the slight elevation which this afforded, the stranger at once addressed the gathering in their native tongue.

“Brethren of Israel,” he said, “I greet you in the name of Jehovah.” With these few simple words he gained at once the full attention of all who were gathered there.

“The God of our fathers,” he continued, “has sent me with a message to His people scattered among the nations of the earth. It is not need for me to speak to you of Him, ye know His law and ye know His mighty deeds. Let me then speak of myself that ye may judge the message.

“I am a citizen of Tarsus of Cilicia, a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee. I have sat at the feet of the masters at Jerusalem, Gamaliel the wise and the leaders of the Sanhedrin according to the strict manner of the fathers, being zealous for God even as ye all are this day.

“There was a man in Nazareth of Galilee, who called Himself the anointed of the Lord, sent, as He said, to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the brokenhearted and to proclaim the year of Jehovah’s favor. He spake as a prophet sent by Jehovah; by His hand the blind received their sight, the dead were raised up, the lepers were cleansed, the deaf heard and the poor had good tidings preached unto them, and many there were, who believed Him to be the Messiah, the Son of God.

“But the high-priests and the elders of the people, the scribes and the pharisees did not so believe, and, that He might no longer stir up and pervert the nation they delivered Him unto the Gentiles to be crucified because He had blasphemed and made Himself the Son of God.

“Then His disciples claimed that He rose from the dead on the third day and appeared to them in Jerusalem and Galilee, and they went about preaching Him crucified and risen.

“For this the high-priests and the elders of the people beat them and put them into prison, that they should not speak in the name of Jesus.

“In those days there was a man named Stephen, who was a follower of Jesus and wrought great wonders and signs among the people. And the wise men of the synagogues, those of Cilicia and Asia, the Alexandrians and Cyrenians and Libertines, disputed with him. Then they brought him before the council and for his blasphemous words he was cast from the city and stoned. I rejoiced in his death, and laid waste the church, entering into every house and dragging forth men and women who believed on Jesus, committed them to prison.”

The speaker paused and glanced around at his audience as if to study their faces and learn how his words had been received. There was open admiration in many of the eyes that met his own, while others moved uneasily as they looked into the piercing eyes before them.

The pause was only momentary, however, and while his hearers awaited the next words of the speaker in breathless silence he continued:

“Ye know, my brethren, how Jehovah promised unto David that His mercy should not depart from him and that the throne of his kingdom should be established forever. Our prophets have beheld in their visions the Messiah, and His everlasting kingdom, and our poets have sung of His majesty and glory. In the night of our nation’s troubles the Star out of Jacob hath been our hope and the Shoot out of the stock of Jesse our comfort.

“As our fathers, so have we also hoped and waited for the fulfillment of the promise, and yet we are laughed to scorn and despised by the Gentiles.

“But rejoice, O Israel, and be exceeding glad, for your warfare is accomplished and your iniquity is pardoned, no more shall the Gentile

shake his head and hiss because the glory is departed from Juda.

“The anointed of the Lord is come and in the fullness of time Jehovah has visited and redeemed His people.

“He has raised unto David a righteous Branch as He spake to our fathers by the mouth of His holy prophets, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days.

“For know ye, my brethren, the carpenter’s son of Nazareth is the Son of God, the King of Israel!”



III.

A mighty wave of excitement moved the gathering as these words, so different from any that had been expected, fell from the speaker’s lips. Anger, scorn, hate, doubt, relief, approval, all the emotions felt by those present seemed to mingle into one great outcry that threatened for the moment to end the meeting in confusion and riot.

Paul, the apostle of Christianity—for as the reader will know by this time, the speaker was none other than he—calmly surveyed the mul-

titude. In the midst of the excitement and uproar he stretched out his hand with a commanding gesture, the strange light again gleamed from those bright, black eyes, and so great was the power of that simple look and gesture that the tumult ceased almost immediately and quiet was gradually restored.

As the excitement subsided a shrill voice from the audience broke forth: "If the carpenter's son is the Messiah and the eternal King of Israel, didst thou hope to please Jehovah by persecuting His followers?"

"Thou hast a right to question thus," said the speaker, "hear my answer and judge, O brethren of Israel.

"I verily thought that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth; having received authority from the chief priests. I punished His followers oftentimes in all the synagogues and strove to make them blaspheme, and persecuted them even unto foreign cities. I did shut up many of them in prison and when they were put to death I gave my vote against them.

"Whereupon, as I journeyed to Damascus, at midday, I saw a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me.

“I fell to the ground and a voice spake to me in the Hebrew language: ‘Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?’

“I answered: ‘Who art Thou, O Lord?’ and He said: ‘I am Jesus whom thou persecutest!’

“‘What shall I do, O Lord,’ I answered; and He said: ‘arise and enter into the city and it shall be told thee, what thou must do.’

“And when I arose and opened my eyes I saw nothing; and they led me by the hand into Damascus and I was three days without sight and did neither eat nor drink.

“And one, Ananias, a devout man, came unto me and said: ‘Brother Saul, receive thy sight!’ And that very hour I looked up on him. And he said: ‘The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know His will and to see the Righteous One and be a witness for Him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins.’”

The apostle paused. The memory of the experiences through which he had passed had visibly moved him and frequently he had only with difficulty controlled his emotions.

“Thus,” he continued at length, “I came from darkness into light, and I praise God with

all my heart that His grace in Christ Jesus hath opened mine eyes.

“And now, O my brethren, I am come to preach to you the Gospel of Christ and salvation, and I am not ashamed of it. The salvation is to every one that believeth, the Jew first and also the Gentile.

“We call ourselves Jews, my brethren, and Jehovah’s people. Who is a Jew? Not he that is one outwardly in the letter, but he is a Jew that is one inwardly in the spirit. We have the law; yea, and the law is good; but we are not justified by the law, rather are we all under the curse of the law, for it is written: ‘Cursed be he that confirmeth not the words of the law to do them,’ and: ‘There is none righteous, not one, they have all turned aside, there is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one.’ Therefore, by the law there is no flesh justified in the sight of God, for through the law cometh the knowledge of sin.

“Know ye not the words of the prophet: ‘The righteous shall live by faith,’ even as Abraham was justified? Before the law was given, Abraham believed in Jehovah and He reckoned it to him for righteousness. Therefore those are the true children of Abraham

that are of the faith. And it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the handmaid and one by the freewoman; the son of the handmaid is born after the flesh, but the son of the freewoman is born through promise.

“Now we, brethren, are children of the promise, as Isaac was. As long as the heir is a child, he is under guardians and stewards; so we were held in bondage until in the fullness of time God sent forth His Son, born of a woman and under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

“Thou speakest well,” a voice from the audience again broke in, “but doth not Jeremiah say, that ‘unto David shall be raised a righteous Branch, and He shall reign as a King and deal wisely and execute justice and righteousness in the land’ and that ‘Juda shall be saved and Israel dwell safely?’ Instead of occupying a throne the carpenter’s son was raised to a cross!”

“What of the words of Daniel,” spoke up another, almost at the apostle’s elbow, an elderly man in the garb of a Rabbi, “he saw one as a son of man come with the clouds of heaven and dominion and kingdom and glory was given Him; that all the peoples and nations

and languages should serve Him. Behold, Israel is yet in bondage and the followers of the Nazarene are found only among the lowly and the humble.”

“Forget not, O my brethren,” answered the apostle, “that the thoughts of Jehovah are not our thoughts, nor His ways our ways. Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, is indeed a King and His a Kingdom and a glory above any of the world. His Kingdom is not of this world, though it is in it; it is not a kingdom of provinces or of the power of legions, it is for immortal souls. Be not ashamed of the humility of the Christ nor of the death He has suffered, for in His death He has gained greater victory than ever did Caesar’s legions.

“Doth not Isaiah say of Him: ‘He was despised and rejected of men; as one from whom men hide their face He was despised; and we esteemed Him not.’

“‘But He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities and with His stripes are we healed. He was as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth. Therefore will His portion be with

the great, because He has poured out His soul unto death and bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.'

"Thus was God in Christ, my brethren, reconciling the world unto Himself and not reckoning unto them their trespasses; and I beseech you, my brethren, be ye reconciled to God! Has He not made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him!

"O, my brethren of Israel! If the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of an heifer sanctify unto the cleanness of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who offered Himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God!

"And for this His boundless love I give myself with all my heart, with all my soul and with all my mind to the service of God and Christ! Hath He loved us so that He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, who shall condemn the faithful? Neither persecution nor famine nor peril, neither things present nor things to come shall separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!

“I have said, my brethren, and may the love of God the father and the grace of the Lord Jesus the Christ be with you.”



IV.

The shadows of evening had already deepened before the massive doors of the warehouses at the wharf had been closed for the night; the slaves had departed singly and in groups to their humble quarters and by the time the stillness of night had settled over the city there was nothing about the wharf to suggest the busy scene of the day, except the great hulls of the vessels looming up out of the darkness, with here and there a light to show the presence of watchmen.

Had the few pedestrians who crossed the great bridge after nightfall cared to stop and listen, they could have heard muffled sounds upon the heavy woodwork of the wharf, while an eye accustomed to the gloom could have distinguished a number of straggling shadowy forms gliding through the darkness.

The wharf ended at the bridge but projected far enough under it to furnish access to an opening, half door, half window, that had been

left in the solid masonry of the wall. This opening furnished the only means of access to a large cave-like apartment that extended for a considerable distance under the abutment to the bridge.

On both sides of this room were piled up great masses of all kinds of material for fitting out and repairing ships. The rear part of the room had been cleared, however, and was now occupied by a score or more of persons who were gathered around the smoky, flickering glare of a torch by which the room was lighted. Right under the light could be seen the features of the Ethiopian and the two giants from the Rhine as well as those of Paul, the teacher of Christianity. All appeared to be engaged in earnest conversation.

“I cannot understand it,” one of the group was saying. “Had I been in Rajah’s place, Mizrah would have paid dearly for his meanness and his cowardice. Why has he a strong right arm, if not to deal revenge to the offender?”

“I thought of Christ,” said Rajah, “who bore patiently the reviling of His enemies and had no thought of vengeance.”

“I would think more of your god,” said

Otho, one of the Teuton giants, "if he had sent his thunderbolt to punish the Roman coward, who permitted an innocent man to be crucified. Had I been there with my brethren of the forest, not a whole head would be left of the villains!"

"How could I blame thee for thy thoughts," said Paul, "thou speakest as thy fathers taught thee. Even the law of Israel saith: 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But the Christ has come and fulfilled the law and shown us the love of God. Love can do no harm and so He said: 'Love your enemies and do good to them that hate you, then you will be children of your Father who is in heaven.' If thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink; then you shall heap coals of fire on his head and overcome evil with good."

While this conversation was going on, several other men and women had entered almost noiselessly, each one carefully replacing the heavy curtain which concealed the light inside.

Among the last to enter was a woman, an Egyptian, as her garment and headdress indicated. At first she advanced hesitatingly toward the small group of women already there,

as if to join them, but suddenly stopped and with gestures of despair threw herself to the ground sobbing piteously.

Several of the women were at her side almost instantly to comfort her and soothe her troubled spirit. But she only wailed the louder, tearing her hair and throwing dust upon her head in the anguish of her heart.

“Leave me!” she cried, “I have fallen! Do not come near me! I am unworthy of your sympathy and your love!”

While all eyes were turned upon the woman who continued to wail and sob in her despair, the apostle arose and walked toward her. “Woman,” he said firmly, “Confess your transgression that the peace of God may enter your heart.”

“I am not worthy! I am not worthy!” she moaned. “My transgression is too great to be forgiven!”

“Fear not, my daughter,” answered he, “the grace of our Lord and Savior is mightier than sin, and His love can make you clean.”

“I have betrayed, I have denied the Christ!” sobbed the woman, “I have part with Him no longer!”

“Though thou hadst denied Him thrice,”

said the apostle, "He will not deny thee, if only thy heart is repentant and thou wilt trust His grace. Is not the Son of Man come to seek and to save that which is lost? Doth He not leave even the ninety and nine in the wilderness to go after the one sheep that is lost?"

"I have wept and suffered since that miserable day of my denial," said the woman, "if the Christ can give peace again to my spirit, His praises shall be ever upon my lips, and the poor and the suffering among the brethren shall never be in want."

There was silence in the room as the woman paused; her head was bowed and she was weeping still, but more softly, as if the mere hope of comfort had already stilled her violent emotions. They had placed her upon one of the rude stools that stood about the room and after a few moments she began again:

"Ye know that I am Nydia, the wife of Artaces. He is stern and hard and faithful to the worship of his fathers, even as I had been until the story of the Christ took hold on me.

"When Artaces found that I had lent a willing ear to the words of the Galilaean, his wrath was great. By all the gods and sacred beasts of Egypt he cursed the day that I had

heard the story of the Christ and him who told me; he swore by Isis that he would divorce me if I ever visited your gatherings again. In vain were all my tears and my entreaties, they only roused him more.

“Therefore I came not to your gatherings. I knew not what to do. I could not forget what I had heard from you and still I found no peace therein; I longed to be with you, I longed to know if he would keep his fearful oath. I feared the thoughts and sorrows of my heart would make me ill, and though I longed for death, the thought of it did frighten me.

“One day there came a thought that promised peace. I thought of Isis, the splendors of her temple and the oracle within its sacred shrine. At the appointed time I brought my gift and offering. The priest, as he received them, said: ‘The boons of Isis are for the faithful only; dost thou renounce the Nazarene and all His teachings, then curse the day thou heardst His name and him that spake of it to thee.’ And I, intent upon my sorrows and agony of mind, and on the peace I hoped for, did as he bade me.”

“O Christ, forgive her,” moaned one of the women, “she knew not what she did!”

“Amen! Amen!” echoed the others.

“How sweet the sound of prayer,” sobbed Nydia, again overcome by her emotions, “none have prayed for me in the days of my suffering, and since that wretched day I could not. But let me end.”

At that instant a great tumult and the sound of many voices was heard outside.

“We have trapped the birds nicely,” shouted one, “let none escape!”

“The blasphemous hypocrites!” cried a shrill voice, “let us see what their crucified god can do!”

At the first alarm the light inside had been put out and Rajah with Otho and his companion Dodan and several others at once hurried to the opening to prevent, if possible, any one from entering.

They were none too soon, for some of the ruffians were already in the doorway and would certainly have entered but for the darkness. Rajah endeavored to close the heavy door on the intruders, but without success, and presently found himself in the midst of a fierce combat.

With the help of his two giant companions, however, he forced the assailants back through

the door and out upon the wharf. There, by the pale light of the moon just rising above the housetops, he found himself suddenly face to face with Mizrah!

“Defend thyself!” hissed the Hebrew, making a savage bound for the Ethiopian. His knife gleamed in the air and, but for the strong arm of Otho,—who, quick as a flash, grasped the descending arm from below,—would have been buried in Rajah’s breast.

As it was, the blade missed its aim, but Rajah, stepping back to avoid the fierce Mizrah, came too near the edge of the wharf and losing his balance, fell with a mighty splash into the muddy water below.



V.

The dwelling houses of Antioch were built after the peculiar manner followed in Eastern cities even unto this day. Most of them were square, or nearly so, one or two stories high and built around an open court, from which light and air was supplied to the different rooms. All of the rooms opened toward the court and upon high broad porches, shaded by great awnings during the daytime. The walls of the

buildings were constructed of solid masonry, often two to three feet thick, to keep out the fierce heat of the Eastern summer and contained very few openings of any kind. The roofs were generally flat and arranged to serve as a general family resort after the sun had sunk below the horizon.

Some days after the meeting in the market-place we might have found a mother and her daughter in a comfortably furnished room of one of the larger dwellings in the Jewish quarter. The mother, an elderly woman, well dressed, was reclining upon a divan, a letter, the seal of which was broken, in her hand; at her elbow, seated on a low stool, was the daughter, a slender girlish figure, her face buried in her hands and resting on the divan which her mother occupied.

“Be comforted, my Miriam,” the mother was saying while she gently stroked her daughter’s rich black hair, “thy mother shares thy sorrow. Though His ways are often strange, Jehovah is wise and good, and what He does is well.”

“O mother!” sobbed the girl, “I cannot bear it! O, were I dead!”

“When the message of thy father’s death at

sea was brought to me I thought that I could live no longer; my life seemed dark and hopeless and I wished to die. Though sorrowing still, I am contented with Jehovah's ways. Thou art young and wilt survive the sorrow and the wrong that has been done thee."

A servant here entered the room. "The good Joseph waiteth at the door," she announced.

"We shall be glad to see him," said the woman, "let him in at once."

"Thou comest as a friend in need, my brother," she said a moment later, as he, whom we have met as the companion of the apostle, entered the apartment. Seating himself upon the divan which the servant brought, Joseph glanced questioningly at his sister and the weeping girl beside her. "Thou hast another sorrow Esther," he said, "and Miriam is weeping?"

"Go, Miriam," said the mother, "and fetch us the bread and wine."

When Miriam had left the room her mother said: "Listen, my brother, and I will read thee a letter I received this morning," and without waiting for a reply she began to read:

Eighth month, 15th day.

On the road to Damascus.

When you read this letter, I shall have left the city on very important business at Damascus. I know not when I shall return. I have been told that Miriam has joined the false and blasphemous sect of the Nazarene. If this be so, she cannot be the wife of Eleazar, who is true to the faith of his fathers. A messenger of yours may find me at the house of Judah in Damascus.

In haste,

Eleazar.

“Only a month ago I met him in Damascus at the house of Judah,” said Joseph, “but little did I think that he would thus afflict those who had been friends unto his father ere he was born.”

“It was their fathers’ dearest wish, that they, their only children, should perpetuate their name and their estate,” said Esther, “and now,—not yet a year is passed since both have perished in the stormy sea,—he rudely breaks what should have been a sacred trust to him.”

“If his heart is not in the trust,” said Joseph, “it is better broken than kept.”

Miriam here re-entered the room bearing a tray with two cups of wine and several slices of honeyed bread. When she had passed them around her mother said: "Thou hast not brought a cup of wine for thee, my daughter?"

"Nay, mother, I could not eat or drink when my heart fasteth in its sorrow."

"I pity thee," said Joseph, "that thou shouldst bear so hard a burden now, but do not doubt that all is well and for thy good."

"If Eleazar cared not more for thee than to forsake thee thus, thou might'st be glad of thy escape. Our fortune does not compare with what the daughters of Judah of Damascus will inherit."

"Nay, mother, speak not so, I cannot hear it; do not judge him harshly, mother. Because our father's death had filled my heart with sorrow, he may have thought I cared not for him."

"He should have honored thy grief so much the more because of sorrow for his own dead. He felt the guilt upon his conscience, else he would have come himself."

Miriam said nothing, but busied herself with gathering up the remains of the repast and left the room.

"She suffers much already, Esther," said

Joseph, “do not make her suffer more. I shall bring Saul of Tarsus that he may speak to Miriam. He will know how to help her bear her sorrow. The spirit of Jehovah is mighty in him.”

“I have heard him speak in the market-place,” said Esther, “he shall be always welcome here.—How didst thou come to be with him?”

“I met him at Jerusalem,” answered Joseph, “but Ananias of Damascus had spoken to me of him before, of how he had been converted by the Lord Himself; how he himself was called to see him and in the power of the Lord restored his sight. I shall tell thee all some day.

“You know that I was here last year, exhorting those whom I found believing in the Christ. From here I went to Tarsus, chiefly to get Saul to come to Antioch and preach the name of Jesus. I am glad that he is come and I am sure that many people will be added unto the Lord.”

“How long wilt thou be with us, Joseph?”

“I cannot say, Esther. I forgot to tell thee that my name is Joseph no longer. It is the custom with the brethren at Jerusalem to change their name when they receive the Christ, and thus the apostles have changed mine to Barnabas, or ‘son of exhortation.’”

“How couldst thou change the name thy father gave thee!” answered Esther, as if reproving him. “I for one shall always call thee Joseph, as of old.”

“I will not chide thee, if thou dost, for happy memories’ sake. The name was dear to me and I only gave it as a sign that all I have I give for Christ.—Hast thou heard the news,” he continued, changing the subject, “The rabbi Ezekiel has promised Saul that he might preach in the synagogue upon the Sabbath.”

“That is good tidings, verily. No doubt Saul’s answer in the market-place opened his eyes to see the truth. O, that Simeon had lived to see the word of Christ spread over the lands! It was the one gladness of his heart.”

“Be sure, O Esther, that he sees it now much better than he could have known it here.—But fare thee well! my duty calls.”

“If thou must go, fare well. Do not forget thy home is here as long as thou remainst in Antioch.”



VI.

Near the end of the great bridge and about a five minutes’ walk from the wharf was a caravansary, or khan, as these places were called at

the time. There were a score or more of them in different parts of the city, great hostleries, built for the accommodation of the numerous caravans that traveled between Antioch and points in the interior. At one end of the enclosure were a number of stalls for the donkeys or camels of which the caravans were chiefly composed, while the elephants that occasionally brought costly silks and spices from the region beyond the Indus were chained to stout posts in the large open space in front. Along one side of the spacious yard were ranged lodgings for the merchants who traveled with the caravans, and huts or tents for the drivers and slaves who attended them, while a high stone wall formed the other boundary.

Because of its proximity to the river this particular khan was the usual resort of such caravans whose cargoes were to be reloaded into ships for Ephesus, Corinth, Rome and other Western cities.

During the night following the meeting of the Christians under the bridge a drove of pack mules, heavily laden with rugs and tapestries from Armenia, had arrived, and a little later a procession of elephants with their costly burdens.

Early the following morning, therefore, the place presented a very busy scene. At the news of the arrival of the caravan the merchants had hurried to the khan and were inspecting the goods and driving bargains with the owners; slaves were unloading the goods and taking them to their proper store-rooms; and drivers and attendants were feeding their animals or taking them to their respective stalls.

Among the many slaves at work there we find Rajah receiving the ponderous boxes and packages which Indian slaves were unloading from the back of one of the elephants. He showed no sign of his adventure and to all appearances thought only of his work; his two companions, Otho and Dodan, were engaged in carrying the goods to the river front. The morning air was crisp and all entered briskly into their labors.

Off to one side was Joseph talking with a group of merchants and taking notes upon his tablet.

“Very nearly thy cargo had been lost,” one of them was saying; “as we were resting for the night among the wilds of Taurus, a horde of bandits broke upon us and would have killed

and plundered us. It was well for us that we had weapons and knew how to use them. One of the slaves was slain, however, but the rogues were beaten back and we had no more trouble.”

“Who was the slave?” asked Joseph anxiously.

“Jonah, from Cyprus,” was the answer.

“This year would have made him free,” said Joseph sadly; “his mother is a widow and it will be sad news for her. But she shall not suffer, he died doing his duty.”

“He was brave and faithful and we buried him with honor,” said the other.

As the load was by this time disposed of, the animal was taken to its stall, and Joseph and his companions walked over to another part of the yard.

“Mizrah is here also,” Otho said a few moments later to Rajah, who was helping him lift a great bundle upon his massive shoulders, “thou hadst best be on thy guard.”

“I have not seen him,” said Rajah, “where is he?”

“He came up from the wharf a moment ago and was put to work unloading the elephant next to this one. I like it not, he may do to-day what he could not yesterday. Be watchful!”

“I fear him not,” said Rajah, “he dares not harm me here.”

Rajah would not have felt so sure of his safety, however, if he had seen the wicked leer on Mizrah’s face as he peered cautiously around the rear of the elephant after Otho had departed again for the wharf.

All the goods had by this time been removed from the elephants back and the driver was making preparations to unload another one of the beasts some distance away. Rajah was kneeling upon the ground gathering the smaller parcels into a great basket by his side.

Busy with his work he did not see Mizrah stealthily approaching with the sharply pointed iron rod, by means of which the driver controlled and guided the elephants. Mizrah crawled along the ground just before the beast’s fore feet, the rod poised in one hand, ready to bury it in the back of his victim.

Suddenly the elephant, with a snort of pain, rushed forward. By a careless move of his arm Mizrah had pricked the beast’s hide with the rod, thus causing him to start forward. Unable to escape quick enough, Mizrah was caught under the ponderous foot of the huge beast and pinioned to the ground.

At the first sound of alarm Rajah jumped up to look for the cause of the trouble. Seeing Mizrah under the elephant's foot he quickly seized the rod which Mizrah had dropped and endeavored to make the beast move one way or another, so as to free Mizrah. The enraged animal taking Rajah for its enemy, seized him at once with its powerful trunk and hurled him to the ground with tremendous force.

All this happened so quickly that the driver had no time to prevent the accident. Hurrying to the spot he could only quiet the beast and prevent further trouble.

A crowd of merchants and attendants immediately gathered, among them Joseph and Amonides, the proprietor of the khan.

"Whose are the slaves?" asked Joseph.

"The Ethiopian belongs to Artaces, the Egyptian," spoke up Dodan, "I know not whose the other one may be."

"It is Mizrah, the slave of Eleazar, the Jew," said another.

"Eleazar is in Damascus, as I happen to know," said Joseph. Turning to Amonides he continued:

"Take him into the tent yonder and see if he may be saved!"

“Artaces is here somewhere,” said Amonides, “I spoke to him but a moment ago. Here he is now,” he added, as a tall, dark complected man with hard, forbidding features made his way through the crowd.

“Is that thy slave?” said Joseph, pointing to the form of Rajah.

“He was my slave while he was of use,” said Artaces coldly, when he had heard what had happened. “He is of no use now and is only a Christian dog after all.” Then he turned and went his way.

“Heartless wretch!” said Joseph to himself, “See that the two are taken care of,” he said to Amonides, “thou shalt not go unrewarded, there is yet life in both.”

At the order of Amonides two sturdy slaves at once took up Mizrah’s crushed and bleeding body and carried it to the tent where they laid it upon a rude bed of straw. They then returned for Rajah, who appeared to be dead already; blood was oozing from a deep wound in his head, caused by the fall upon the rough rocks with which the yard was paved.

Joseph followed them and knelt down at Rajah’s side, as he lay there quietly, his eyes closed as if asleep, and laid his hand upon the black and bloody forehead.

Slowly the eyes opened at the touch and rested gratefully on Joseph's kindly face. Then his lips opened and he said quite distinctly: "Love your enemies and do good unto them that hate you and you shall be children of your father in heaven."

Slowly and faintly the last words had been uttered; a quiver passed through the giant frame, a wild fearful look came into his eyes, then—"O Christ, in Thy hands,"—that was all. The look softened, a peaceful, even happy expression spread over his features, and his eyes closed in the sleep that knows no waking.

Silently Joseph had watched the dying man and listened to his last feeble utterance. In the gladness of his heart for the soul that had found rest, he had almost forgotten where he was. He was awakened from his reverie by loud moans behind him. Turning he found Mizrah writhing in agony and moaning piteously.

Arising and going to his side he asked kindly: "Has thy pain increased?" then bending over him he took the rough hand in his own; "Peace be with you," he said softly.

Mizrah stared. In all the years of slavery he had not been spoken to in such tones. The

gentle touch of Joseph's hand and the kindly pitying look in his eyes was not without effect.

"Thou art an Israelite," he said at length, "and mayst understand me."—"Must not the Jew hate the Gentile?" he asked. "The Jew hath the Promise, the Gentile is godless. And when the Gentile takes the Promise and casts the pearl before the swine, must not the Jew hate doubly? And when the Gentile holds a crucified blasphemer to be the Son of God, is not to hate and to revenge the Jew's most sacred duty?"

He had tried to raise himself to a sitting posture, but sank back again upon the straw, exhausted by his effort.

"Thou must not speak so much," said Joseph, "thou must rest and be quiet. I have sent my servant for ointment and the wine, that will strengthen thee and then I shall speak to thee."

In a few moments the servant entered and handed Joseph a flask of wine and the ointment. Mizrah drank eagerly. "It is the best that Cyprus affords," Joseph added.

As Mizrah complained of severe pain in his side and back, Joseph set about ascertaining the nature of his injuries. He saw at once that

there was little hope for the man's recovery and quickly dressed the wounds and bruises with the ointment.

Then he sat down at the bedside and said: "Listen to me, my brother." He spoke to him long and earnestly about the hope of Israel, the fulfillment of the promise in Christ, His words and deeds of love and mercy, and of His death upon the cross for the sins of the world.

And Mizrah listened. Many things appeared to him in a new light and somehow he liked the light, for with its warm and kindly glow it was already quickening his stubborn, hardened spirit. He said nothing while Joseph spoke, nor when he had ended. Joseph handed him the flask again and he took a deep draught. Then his eyes closed.

Suddenly he opened them again. "Is he dead?" he asked, pointing to where Rajah lay. Joseph nodded.

"I meant to kill him as a blasphemer of the Promise," Mizrah said feebly, "but he tried to save me even with danger unto himself."

"It was the love of Christ," said Joseph, as the meaning of Rajah's last words dawned upon him.

"I wronged him," continued Mizrah, "even though I meant to serve Jehovah."

Now the pain came over him again. Writhing in agony and wringing his hands he moaned: "My God! my loins are filled with burning. I am faint and sore bruised because of thine indignation, O Jehovah!"

Joseph bent over him again. "Dost thou believe in the Christ?" he asked earnestly. "He will not break the bruised reed and the dimly burning wick will He not quench."

Mizrah tried to speak, but could not. He nodded faintly. He seemed to feel easier again and his eyes closed. Joseph's hand rested gently upon his brow and he watched anxiously for a change in his condition. Mizrah's breath came slower and more faintly. A sigh, a quiver, and all was over.

* * *

Without the tent there was the clamor and the din of the world and its work, but within there reigned the peace of God, and with his head bowed in his hands Joseph contemplated the wonderful ways of Jehovah.



VII.

It was the evening of the Sabbath, and although the Sabbath had already passed according to the Jewish manner of measuring time,

the restful quiet of the day was still felt in the house of the widowed Esther and her daughter. It was a beautiful evening and Esther and Miriam had sought the house-top, the part of the home usually resorted to at that time of day.

It must be remembered, that climate, the supreme law-giver everywhere in the matter of customs, has in the East assigned to the house-top a peculiar function. The Syrian summer day drives those who seek comfort into the cool and darkened rooms, while night calls them forth early to enjoy the golden moonlight and the soft balmy breezes.

The breezes are found at their best at a slight elevation and the house-top, being easily accessible to all, was found to be the most desirable place to spend the evenings. So the roof became play-ground, place of conversation and general rendez-vous for the family and was ornamented and cared for in much the same manner as the inhabitants of cooler climes decorate the interior of their homes.

The two women were not alone, however. With them was another whom we immediately recognize as Nydia, the Egyptian. For, when Artaces had found that his wife had visited the

gatherings of the Christians despite his threats, he had become so enraged, that he commanded her to leave his house at once and never to come before his eyes again.

In her sorrow Nydia had come to Paul, who by the aid of Joseph had secured a temporary shelter for her in the house of Esther, where Nydia and Miriam had soon become fast friends.

The three were seated in one of the small summer-houses with which the house-top was adorned.

“I have heard this morning,” said Esther, “that Rebekkah, the wife of Aaron the fisherman, is very sick with fever again.”

“It must be very hard for the poor man,” said Miriam; “And the children, so small yet and so many, and none to feed them and care for them.”

“Have they no relatives who could help?” asked Nydia.

“Aaron has a brother here, but he cannot help; and Rebekkah’s mother lives here also, but she is so old and feeble, she could not be of any help to her.”

“Listen to me mother,” said Miriam, “can I not go to them on the morrow? Maybe I can help a little.”

“Thou hast a tender heart my Miriam,” said her mother, “but that cannot be.—Hark, here comes Joseph, go thou and greet him,” she continued, as footsteps were heard coming up the stairway.

When Miriam reappeared she did indeed bring Joseph, who had been expected, but he was not alone.

“I have brought a guest,” said he, “a stranger and yet well known.”

“The peace of Christ be with you,” said the voice of the apostle, for it was he, as the women greeted him. “It has been a happy day for me, the word has been gladly received wherever I spoke. I am sure the Lord has much people in this city.”

“The ways of Jehovah are very wonderful,” said Joseph, “and He spreads the word in many a way we would not think of.” He then told of the tragic death of Rajah and Mizrah and what he had been able to glean of their past. “And now the Lord has claimed His own and they are side by side within their tomb.”

“Who that knew Mizrah would have thought that he would ever die a Christian!” said Esther. “Mizrah was Aaron’s brother, whom we spoke of a few moments ago,” she

continued turning to Nydia, “he was a bond-servant of Eleazar.”

“I want to ask thee something,” said Miriam to Joseph. “Why may I not go to Aaron’s house to attend Rebekkah in her illness and look after her children? They must be in distress and want.”

“Who said thou mayst not go, my daughter?”

“I did not think it proper,” said her mother, “it is no place for her, and Miriam is not accustomed to such work, and besides they all are haters of the Christ.”

“Why should it be no place for Miriam, if she is willing to go?” asked Joseph. “It will be good for her to be thus occupied. Nothing stills the pain of sorrow so well as helping others to bear their burden.”

“We have always had servants, Joseph, the work will be too hard for her; and then the neighborhood is vile and the family is not in good repute.”

“Despise not the children of Jehovah,” said the apostle. “‘Jehovah is high, yet He hath respect for the lowly,’ saith the royal poet. Did not the Christ forsake eternal bliss and

glory to do good unto us, who were His enemies in sin and unbelief?"

"That Aaron's family are haters of Christ," said Joseph, "seems to me a very good reason, why we, who love Him, should show kindness unto them. The spirit of love that Christ brought into the world makes converts more quickly and thoroughly than argument or preaching. Think of Rajah and Mizrah, Esther!"

"The more I think and hear about it," said Nydia, "the more I feel that I must do something for my Master who has done so much for me. Do you think that I could help in some such work like that which Miriam has proposed?"

"How wonderful are the ways and deeds of Jehovah!" cried the apostle. "In going through Antioch among Jews and Gentiles I have often prayed that the love of Christ might constrain some women of the faithful to go forth to the places of misery and sorrow, and by humility and kindness and love scatter the seed of the Gospel of Christ, and behold my prayer is answered beyond my expectations! There is work enough, Nydia, for all the willing ones that may be found!"

“The new faith brings so many new things,” said Esther, I do not yet understand all. It seems as if everything must change.”

“It must,” Paul answered earnestly. “The old things are passed away and all has become new. In the old order of things we all lived unto ourselves, but having received Christ, the faithful must live for Him even as He died and rose again for their sakes.”



The New Life.

“As therefore ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and builded up in Him, and established in your faith, even as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.”—Col. ii. 6. 7.

The story which you have just read, my dear young friends, was written to give you a picture of the work which the apostles of Christ had to perform to establish His church on earth.

Of all the many millions of people that lived in the different countries at that time, only a very few, so few that you could have counted them without much trouble, knew anything of Christ. The rest had never heard of Him, or, if they had, neither believed what they had heard, nor cared for it.

Now you can easily imagine what a piece of work it must have been to get such people to receive Christ, i. e., to believe in Him, to love Him and to live for Him. The incidents you read of in the story all happened within a few days of each other and are taken from the life of only one of the apostles in only one of the many cities which he visited. But this apostle

worked in this way for many years in many different countries and cities, and he only ceased when his enemies succeeded in putting him to death. All the other apostles worked in the same manner in other lands and cities, and because they were faithful in their work and were filled with God's Holy Spirit and lived and worked only for Him, they did not work in vain. After a few years there were many Christian churches in the different cities where they had labored, some large and influential, others smaller and weaker, but all of them faithful to Christ and His word.

Then their enemies,—Jews and Gentiles,—became angry at the headway the Church of Christ was making and resolved to put it down once for all. And so many bloody persecutions were visited upon the Christians. They were forbidden to come together and worship; if they did so, they were either driven away to other cities and countries or taken from their homes and cast into prison, where they were tortured and even killed, because they remained faithful to their Lord and Redeemer.

These persecutions were repeated again and again in every country where Christians lived, for nearly three hundred years, and we often

wonder, that any Christians were left. But their number had not grown less, it had rather increased steadily. For those, who witnessed the trials and persecutions and saw how the believers in Christ remained faithful and suffered pain and torture rather than give up their faith in Christ, began to think about the matter. And the more they thought, the more were they convinced, that, if there were people willing to die for their faith in Jesus, there must be something very precious in such a faith. So they began to attend the secret meetings of the Christians and soon became converts and earnest believers.

Others who had been forced to leave their homes went to other lands and settled there. They began to tell their neighbors about Jesus and His wonderful love, and usually it was not very long before a small church could be established there.

Thus, instead of harming the Church, the persecutions only helped it to grow faster and stronger. That was only, however, because the Christians themselves were faithful everywhere, faithful even unto death.

In our day we are much more fortunate. We need not have our services of worship secretly, and we live in a land where none dare persecute us for our faith in Christ.

In our infancy Christ has received us into His kingdom through baptism in His name; our parents or guardians have tried to give us a Christian training and education, so that it might be as easy as possible for us to receive Christ and lead a Christian life.

How gladly, therefore, should we receive Him into our hearts, how willingly should we give Him our love, how gratefully should we live for Him who has died for us!

And now you have, in the most solemn moment of your life, stood before the altar, in the presence of your God, and renounced everything sinful and ungodly; you have promised to be faithful to your God and His Word.

I have no doubt that you meant and still mean to keep that promise. Probably, however, you thought it easier than it really is. Your pastor has tried to lead you to a full understanding of what it means to receive Christ. Under his guidance you have learned to know the path of righteousness. He has prayed for

you that you may be found steadfast and faithful in that which you have learned.

From now on you will no longer be directly under his eye as you have been heretofore, and his voice cannot always reach you as it did formerly. To a greater extent than ever before you will be left to yourself, and very many of you will be expected to take an active part in the life and work of the world.

As your pastor thinks of all this a sigh escapes him. He is afraid that you will forget your promise and your good intentions, together with his teachings and advice, and lose what you had learned in the work or the amusements of every-day life.

One may be very much interested in what the Bible tells us of Christ, one may know all the facts of His life and work—and it is worth much if one does—but if that is all you have of Him, you have not received Christ. You have received the knowledge of Him as you would that of Geography or Arithmetic; but Christ Himself is vastly more than mere knowledge.

If you realize your faults and shortcomings, if you have discovered that you ought to think

oftener of your God and love Him more, and that you could be purer, nobler, better in thoughts, word and action; if you feel unworthy of God because you are not what you should be—then your heart is open to receive Christ. Those are the hearts that He is willing to enter, those are the souls that He may cheer and brighten with His mercy and grace and loving kindness, there He gladly bestows forgiveness of sins, courage and power to resist and conquer the temptations of the world, joy and peace and happiness that none can take away.

Keep your heart open to receive Christ, endeavor to keep it free from all that you feel He could not approve, communicate with Him in prayer and meditation as with your dearest friend, whenever an opportunity offers; try again every day to live for Him who has died for you, and your soul will thrill with a new life that will help you to grow more like Him from day to day. Then you will learn to understand that to receive Christ means nothing if it does not mean the entrance upon a new life where the things that are old will gradually pass away, while the heart becomes filled with a new and a sacred love.

One day as I was driving through a forest I saw many trees that had been torn up by the roots and destroyed by a storm which had swept over that part of the country some weeks before. With their trunks broken in several places, their limbs dashed into splinters and scattered around and the black and torn roots exposed, they presented a sad picture of ruin and desolation. As I was wondering why the storm had not destroyed all of the trees in that forest, I noticed that none of the uprooted trees showed the large central tap-root which goes down deep into the ground. The roots which had been torn up by the violence of the storm must all have been near the surface of the earth and thus could not offer much resistance. No doubt, I thought to myself, that is the secret. The other trees, or most of them, have their tap-root securely anchored in the earth and were therefore able to withstand the storm.

During the years of my ministry I have seen many children stand before the altar on the day of their confirmation and heard them promise to be faithful to their God. Then they went forth to take an active part in the work of the world, each in his own place. And as I think of

many of them, they seem like the uprooted trees which I have described. The storms of life, its troubles, temptations and trials came and—they fell before them, so that now their godless, worldly lives present a sad picture of destruction and ruin. They were not rooted firmly enough in Christ and His word, and instead of obtaining strength of purpose and power of resistance from their faith they lost what hold they had.

Now many varieties of forest trees have not been provided with the powerful trunk-root that anchors them deep in the soil and furnishes strength and power and they are therefore more at the mercy of the tempest than others. With us, however, this is different. All who are baptized into the name of Christ and have the knowledge of what He has done for them, have, as we might say, been planted in Him and may become firmly “rooted in Him” as the apostle says. By this he means that close and intimate union with the Redeemer of which Christ Himself speaks, when he says: “Abide in Me and I in you.” John xv. 4. To be rooted in Christ means to be in as close and constant touch with Him as the tree is with the soil upon which it stands. Let your

thoughts and desires be those of Christ, ask yourself: "What would Jesus do?" when you are making plans or forming decisions; study the Word of God with the single purpose to see Jesus and Him only and make it the standard of your thoughts and actions. Then you will become more and more firmly rooted in Him and more and more able to withstand the temptations of the world.

No doubt one of the most serious questions which now concern you is the question as to the trade or occupation you are to follow. This is, indeed, a very important matter and much of your future happiness depends upon your decision. In deciding this question you will have to consider not only your tastes and inclinations, or the opportunities that are offered to you, but also your abilities and the means at your disposal. Whatever your choice may be, I trust that your occupation will be a decent and an honorable one, and I heartily join your friends and relatives in wishing you God's blessing in any such undertaking.

However important this matter is, there is still another much more important point involved. Usually this earthly life alone is con-

sidered in the choice of a career or an occupation, and men forget that that part of life which lies between the cradle and the grave is really only an insignificant part, a mere fraction, of the whole.

Our life cannot be measured by years, and the grave is not its end, for beyond the grave it merges into the vastness of eternity. All of us are workers for eternity, whether we wish to be or not. Time furnishes the opportunity for the work each one is doing as well as the tools with which the work is done, but the design and object of the work as well as the material is of God, eternal. To illustrate this aspect of our life the apostle uses the words: "buildded up in Him." Christ is compared not only with the soil in which His believers must be firmly rooted to obtain life and strength, but also with a corner-stone and foundation upon which the life of the faithful must rest in order that "each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple of the Lord; in whom ye also are to be buildded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." (Eph. ii. 21. 22.)

As the foundation or corner-stone supports and gives shape and direction to the entire

building, so must Christ, the “chief corner-stone that is laid in Zion,” (I. Pet. ii. 6.) support and direct the life of His followers. Only in so far as this is the case, can they build themselves into “a holy temple of the Lord,” a habitation of God in the Spirit.

There, my dear young friends, is the plan of your life-work laid out before you. Whatever your trade or occupation, you cannot afford to forget that you are builders for eternity, working for God’s own purpose. The work you do upon the farm, in the shop or office, or wherever your field of labor may be, will be, at the best, only for a few short years, in spite of the pains you take with it or the time you spend upon it, while the work you do in building your life “into a holy temple of the Lord” will stand through all eternity.

To do this work right you must have Christ as your corner-stone and foundation. Nothing else will do. Do not build upon the riches of this world: they are apt to take wings when you least suspect it; do not trust to your friends: they may leave you when you need them most; do not rely on what others say or do, or what they may think of you: opinions often change very quickly, and to-morrow you may sigh for the reputation you had to-day.

Take Christ for your corner-stone. Let Him direct the line of your conduct and your every duty. Hew straight to that line. Bring every thought of your heart, every word of your lips, every action of your life into rigid accordance with it. If you fail once, try again. Never give up. Be faithful.

Then will the structure of your life stand safe and secure, though everything totter and fall around it; then will it appear in beautiful and noble proportions, though your days had been spent in humility and even in suffering. And when at last Death calls a halt, God Himself will carry it forward to glorious perfection.



Consecration.



Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;
Take my hands and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.

Take my feet and let them be
Swift in service, Lord, for Thee;
Take my voice and let me sing
Always, only, for my King.

Take my lips and let them be
Filled with messages for Thee;
Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold.

Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise;
Take my intellect and use
Ev'ry pow'r as Thou shalt choose.

Take my will and make it Thine,
It shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart, it is Thine own,
Let it be Thy royal throne.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour
At thy feet its treasure-store;
Take myself and I will be
Ever, only, all, for Thee!

Ev. Hymnal.

A Serious Matter.

There is a pretty fable that tells of a camel-driver in Syria, whose animal became wild and endeavored to get away from him. In the struggle to obtain its freedom, the beast suddenly turned upon the driver, biting and kicking at him, so that he had to seek safety in flight.

Without looking about him the man ran on until he was stopped by a broad and deep abyss that suddenly yawned before him. Behind was the camel, snorting and furious, coming nearer and nearer. Looking around for a place of safety he saw a dwarfed and stunted bush that had grown out from the side of the abyss and to it he made his way, thinking to cling to it until the danger above had passed.

Upon looking about him, he discovered that the cliff descended abruptly for many hundred feet, while far down at the bottom he could see the fiery tongue of an immense dragon, whose eyes glared up at him out of the darkness. His heart sank at the sight. What if he should lose his hold upon the bush! What

if the bush should not be able to bear his weight!

To increase his terror still more he observed two mice gnawing at the roots of the bush and carrying them away piece by piece to their nest. It could not be long before the bush would have to give way. He dared not move to drive the mice away for fear of bringing on the dreaded moment so much the sooner. Steadily the mice kept at their work, every little while a tender rootlet was gnawed in two, now and then little clods of earth gave way and rolled down into the gulf below.

As the man thought of the terrible fate that awaited him, he observed what he had not noticed before, that the bush bore a number of bright red berries. Tasting one of them he found them sweet and juicy. Instantly his dangerous position, the camel above, the fiery monster below, the mice, and the bush slowly giving way, were forgotten and while they lasted, the man thought only of the pleasure which the berries gave him.

That was the height of foolishness, you will say. And you are right. But it is just the kind of foolishness you may observe going on around you day after day, and the fable only means to

give us a glimpse of human life as it would really appear to an outside observer.

The camel represents the cares and the anxieties, the worry, the labor, the trouble and the sorrows of life from which mankind would try to escape. But there is no escape except Death, the fiery monster in the bottomless gulf. Day and Night are the mice that incessantly gnaw at the roots of Time, the bush to which man clings, and constantly lessen the distance between him and death. All this is plain to any one, and yet, how easily is the terrible seriousness of it all forgotten, when the berries, the pleasures and amusements of life, "the lust of flesh, the lust of the eyes and the vain glory of life," as the apostle says (I. John ii. 16), are caught sight of!

Life is short, my dear young readers. It may not appear so to you now, as you stand upon its threshold full of hope and confidence and with the desire to be something and to do something. But do not be deceived. Ask those who have lived longest and, though their years were four-score or even more, they will tell you that it seemed but yesterday since they were young and hopeful as you are now, they will

assure you that life is so very short that the best part of it had passed before they realized it.

Though life be short, much, very much, depends upon it. You have an immortal soul to save; in order to do it you are to receive Christ to be rooted and builded up in Him. You are builders for eternity; in order to accomplish anything, you are to live and work in Christ and for Him.

All this is very serious business. It would be serious enough if human life were longer than it is; it is all the more serious because, at the best, it is so short; it is still more serious, because you do not know how much shorter your own may be. If they who have reached a ripe old age consider life short, what shall we call the lives of those that are cut off in the prime of youth or the best years of man and womanhood? You do not know what the future has in store for you. Every day and night takes away twenty-four hours of your life and brings its end so much the nearer. Your hold upon life becomes weaker every day and sooner or later the last day will come. There is no escape.

Are you going to forget all this terrible seriousness of life: the salvation of your im-

mortal soul, your duty to your God and His eternal laws, the still greater seriousness of death; are you going to forget all this for the sake of a few berries you may be able to reach while your life yet lasts? Anything that does make you forget the serious object and duties of your life is dangerous to your best interests, to your eternal welfare.

In one way or another you will encounter many of these dangers along the pathway of your life. Temptation will come to you in many different forms and ways; in no place, at no time and among no company will you be safe from its attacks. If you really desire to receive Christ, to be rooted and builded up in Him that you may walk in Him, it will be necessary that you know the enemy, for then only can you defend yourself.



Danger !



One of the principal sources of temptation and danger to a Christian life are the riches of the world. They are a source of danger not only to those who possess them, but also to those who have them not. No matter to which class you belong, you must be on your guard for the temptations that will confront you.

“The rich and poor meet together,” says King Solomon “and Jehovah is the maker of them all.” (Prov. xxii. 2.) It is no accident that there are rich and poor dwelling together upon God’s earth, it is God’s own order of things and he has so ordered for a purpose. To be poor is, therefore, no more a disgrace than it is an honor to be rich, and it is very foolish for any one, rich or poor, to tax the other’s worth according to riches or poverty in temporal things.

If you are poor, above all things be contented. You can be happy without wealth—very much happier, even, than most people with it—but you cannot be happy without contentment, and the greatest wealth any man may possess is that whereof St Paul writes: I. Tim.

vi. 6. Godliness alone makes true contentment possible, for it relies not upon the abundance of things one may possess, (Luke xii. 15—21.) but has confidence in the promise and help of God. (Hebr. xiii. 5.)

Don't think that you cannot accomplish anything because you are poor. "Jehovah raiseth the poor out of the dust...to make them sit with princes and inherit the throne of glory." (I. Sam. ii. 8.) Almost all of the men who have done great things in the world have come from lowly stations in life. Don't be afraid of the difficulties you see in your path. Set your ideals high and never lose sight of them.

Be faithful in the performance of your duty, no matter how humble it may be. Don't be afraid of work; keep at work; work hard. There is no better school for faithfulness than poverty or adversity. Being thrown upon your own resources, the good that is in you will come to the surface. The greater the difficulties to be overcome, the greater will be the victory when they have been conquered.

These are little guide-posts along the way to success and happiness. If you heed them you will be saved from many of the pit-falls and

dangers that threaten the traveler. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." (Matth. vi. 33.) and you shall find that not only will "all else be added unto you," but also, that your heart will be free from unkind, bitter feelings toward those whom the world calls more fortunate than yourself; you will have neither time nor inclination to envy others for that which you have not, nor will you find it difficult to conquer all temptations to gain success or wealth by dishonest methods.

To those who possess it, wealth affords many and great opportunities for success and happiness. But wealth alone gives neither. Having the means you may obtain a more thorough and therefore more valuable education: good books with all their stores of knowledge and wisdom are at your command; beautiful pictures and works of art will help you to know and to love the true and the beautiful; travel in your own or other countries will show you the wonderful works of God and open your eyes to understand them, while almost every day of your life will give you new opportunities of doing good.

All this is very valuable to many persons and they strive in every way to gain wealth.

But it is really valuable only in so far as it enables you to be better and do more good than would otherwise have been possible. To use wealth merely for ostentation, to gratify one's vanity by extravagance, to be proud of the social position that wealth usually affords, all this is not only extremely vulgar, but positively sinful, for it is a waste of means and opportunities which, according to God's purposes, should have been used for better ends.

God is no respecter of persons; He cares not for fine houses, beautiful furnishings, costly garments, nor for high social position. He looketh upon the heart. "Therefore let not the rich man glory in his riches, but let him that glorieth glory in this that he hath understanding and knoweth Me, that I am Jehovah, who exerciseth loving kindness and righteousness upon the earth." (Jer. ix. 23. 24.) Jesus calls all those persons fools who have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches and "lay up for themselves treasures upon the earth where moth and rust consume and thieves break through and steal," but who are "not rich in God." (Matth. vi. 19; Luke xii. 21.) They are fools because they place a greater value upon that which passeth away, than upon that which abideth eternally.

There is a certain charm in the possession of the wealth of this world that makes it dangerous for the peace and happiness and welfare of the immortal soul. The love and desire for wealth may grow with it, until it has mastered every other love and desire, for “where a man’s treasure is there will his heart be also.” (Matth. vi. 21; Luke xii. 34.) And because it is so easy for man’s heart to become set upon the world and its riches, Christ says: “Verily, I say unto you, it is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matth. xix. 23.)

All who have more than they need of the treasures of this world should take to heart what is written I. Tim. vi. 17—19. If greater wealth, a better education, or a higher social position bring more and greater power and influence to their possessor, they also bring greater duties and sterner responsibilities. Because those who are blessed with the wealth of the world, can accomplish more for the good and happiness of the world, than those who are not so blessed, more will also be demanded of them by a just and righteous God.

If you do not need to earn a living you have all the more time to work for your God and His suffering children; if your life already is

bright and happy, make the lives of those who are in sorrow or trouble brighter and happier. Regard idleness as your worst enemy. Work for any good cause; be sure to work for some good cause; work for every good cause if you can. Look out for opportunities to do good. Make personal efforts to help those who are in distress. Give your heart to charity; it is worth more than your gold. Regard your wealth, your time, your influence as a sacred trust, for the use of which you will have to give an accounting upon the day in which God will judge the world in righteousness.

Remember that you can do no greater harm to your immortal soul, than by spending your time and your money for mere enjoyment, and by giving yourself over to a life of ease and luxury and vanity.



“Be Sober, Be Watchful!”

“Where are you going this afternoon?” said Willie Harris to his chum Charlie Jackson one Sunday morning as they were on their way to Sabbath School.

“I don’t know,” Charlie answered; “Maybe I’ll go fishing with Frank and Albert over to Bass Lake, maybe we’ll all go over to Pleasantville to Grandpa’s.”

“Can’t you go along with me over to Harry Jones’?” said Willie. “Some of us boys were over there last Sunday, an’ we played cards nearly all afternoon. It’s fun, I tell you.”

Now Harry Jones’ father kept the store down at the corner, and Sunday afternoon always found a number of his special friends there, smoking, telling stories and playing cards. All the boys knew that they could tell such funny stories and it was even said that they sometimes played cards for money!

Charlie had never played cards before, but he thought he would like to. It was almost like being a man already just to be in such company. So he considered. “Pa won’t let me,” he said at length.

“Taint no worse to play cards than ‘tis to go fishing,” answered Willie, “an’ besides, you don’t have to tell him where you go.”

“No, but he’d ask if I didn’t go fishing an’ I couldn’t stay at home alone if they went to Grandpa’s.”

“Well, if they don’t go to your grandpa’s you can tell Frank and Albert you don’t want to go fishing. You’d have to walk way out to Bass Lake anyway if you did.”

“They’d ask why I didn’t go an’ then go an’ tell Pa. Besides, I don’t know how to play cards.”

“You’ll learn quick enough, an’ what if they do ask where you’re goin’? You’re fourteen ain’t you? I ain’t fourteen yet, but I just go where I want to Sunday afternoons. I’d think you’re old enough to be your own boss.”

Charlie’s face flushed. They had nearly reached the church gate by this time and the conversation would soon cease.

“I’ll try to come,” Charlie whispered as they entered the gate. “If I can, I’ll be down at the corner by two o’clock.”

Willie and Charlie were both in the Bible class. The story of David and Goliath was the lesson for that day, and the pastor pictured to

them the courage of David and how the arm of Jehovah helped him win the day.

“David was one of the smallest and youngest among all the people there,” he said. “He was not even a soldier and had no experience in fighting, no one would have even thought him fit for a soldier. Yet he had the courage to take up the fight and he won because he was sure that he who fought for God could never lose. Any one could have done what he did if he had only trusted in God the way he did.

“Now I suppose none of you boys want to be called a coward, do you?” said the pastor in conclusion.

A chorus of “noes” answered the question.

“You’re right,” continued the pastor, “its about the meanest thing that could be said of you and I hope none of my boys will ever be guilty of cowardice. There are two kinds of cowards, however,” he added, “and you must be very careful not to get them mixed.”

“Now Charlie,” he asked, “if some one were to ask you to do something you knew was wrong, as going to a dance, or playing cards, and you did not want to, would it be fair to call you a coward?”

Charlie hung his head as he thought of his

conversation with Willie. “No sir, I don’t think it would,” he answered.

“Nor do I,” said the pastor, “because, whenever you could do something wrong and don’t want to, you are fighting against a temptation and you would be a real coward if you did not.

“Only a little while ago we all sang: ‘Stand up, stand up for Jesus, ye soldiers of the cross.’ All our life is really a great war, and the enemy to be fought and driven away are the powers of darkness and the hosts of wickedness, the temptations to wrong-doing of every kind.

“Every temptation is, in fact, a giant Goliath; if you only stop to listen, your conscience will tell you when he is in sight. The first thing you need then is courage. Don’t be afraid of him, but go right at him. The bravest man or boy is always the one who dares to do right, even if others do laugh at him, or even call him a coward. Remember that you are fighting God’s battles, and, if you are only faithful, you will always come out on top.

“A few days ago I was told that some of our boys—I don’t know who, and I don’t want to know—were playing cards down at the store nearly all last Sunday afternoon. If that is true, I am very sorry, for I did not think any

of you would spend your Sunday afternoons in such a manner. Don't forget that you are 'Christian soldiers' and that there are enemies everywhere.

"This morning the doctor told me that Hugh Williams, who, as you all know, has been quite sick, is getting better. He has not been here for four weeks and I know it would please him if we all went over to sing a song or two for him. Who'll go?"

Instantly every right hand was raised.

"That's right," said the pastor, "be here by two o'clock and we'll go over."

Hugh Williams was a very much astonished boy when, at about half past two o'clock nearly all of his Sabbath-school classmates with the pastor at the head filed into his little sick-room. Some of the girls had come also with their teacher, and when all of them started with his favorite song, 'What a Friend We Have in Jesus,' Hugh and his mother wept for joy, and even some of the older boys began to fumble for their handkerchiefs.

The pastor then read a beautiful story to them all and spoke a short prayer. Then they sang again and all went to their several homes.

“That was better than playing cards,” said Willie to Charlie as they passed the store.

* * *

This little incident calls our attention to another class of dangers that beset the pathway of our life. For there are temptations and dangers even in the pleasures and amusements of our life. The danger is all the more serious because it is usually hidden behind a mask of apparently innocent enjoyment.

Do not for a moment think that I would deprive your life of its joy and happiness. I think it is utterly wrong to even attempt to do anything of the kind. There is so much work and care and sorrow crowded into the few years of our life, that it would be cruel to deny to any one the right to enjoy life. I can even say that the real Christian life brings more perfect joy and happiness than anything else in the world could. The Word of God has, indeed, no other purpose than to make all of us really happy.

But there is a difference in the pleasure that one may have. All pleasure is either joy or amusement. Joy is any pleasurable emotion caused by success, good fortune or the like, or by a prospect of possessing what we love or

desire; amusement is anything that will entertain, divert or pleasantly occupy. Joy is the reward of faithful effort or the gift of loving kindness, amusement is designed to kill time; joy makes strong and happy, amusement only tires; joy dwells in the heart, amusement only in the senses.

In the opinion of many persons a game of cards is like any other game and should not, therefore, be considered more harmful than any other.

But the game of cards is a game of chance and all games of chance are harmful in their effects if they are indulged in too long and frequently. Where the winning or losing of a game depends upon one's own good fortune or another's misfortune, the passions are excited, vanity, selfishness and love of gain are stimulated, while the temptation to resort to fraud and dishonesty is very great wherever chance has repeatedly been unfavorable. It is, of course, very natural, that one who has lost should want to play on so as to win, while one who wins, of course, desires to win again. Thus there is not only jealousy, envy and hatred kindled among the players, but usually much valuable time is lost, for a game that was begun

to pass away a few idle moments may last an hour or more, before the players are even with each other. All this time which might have been put to some useful or profitable purpose has been needlessly wasted.

Thus you will see that it is not so much the game itself as the consequences it is almost sure to have that are dangerous to your Christian life. If you take into consideration the places at which, and the company among which cards are usually played, as well as the language used, the subjects spoken of on such occasions, I suppose that you will agree with me that you will be much better off if you are not found there. By not being there you will not lose anything worth having, while you are almost sure to acquire very much which you and those who love you most will some time be very sorry for.

The worst form of the game of cards or any other game of chance is that of gambling, and it makes no difference whether it is done in connection with a game of cards, a horse race or anything else. A gambler is always dishonest, he is in fact really nothing short of a thief, for he takes money which does not belong to him without giving anything in re-

turn. For this reason most cities and many of the states have laws against this evil as against any other kind of crime. Those who practice it are, therefore, criminals and may be punished accordingly. But even if no laws were enacted against the practice anywhere, it would still be absolutely sinful according to the standards of God.

* * *

Strong drink is another source of serious danger to the Christian life. It is, perhaps, least so when used occasionally and moderately in the home, although even such a use has been fruitful of evil results. Wherever it is used regularly or habitually an appetite is created which sooner or later will surely bring ruin, misery and death to its victims.

The first effects of strong drink are those of a stimulant to the machinery of life. As a result the heart, brain and nervous system work with increased energy, and the entire organism may do brisk work for a short time; the mind works more rapidly, the muscles are excited to quick action and the nerves become more sensitive. These effects are but temporary, however, and when they have passed away they leave the body weak and feeble from the enforced activity.

Where liquor is taken in larger quantities, other and more disagreeable effects soon follow. The spinal chord is affected, and little by little the control of the muscles is lost, until at last even the brain suffers, the will is overpowered and reason gives way. Then the animal instincts assume the mastery of the man, the victim is prostrated and at last falls into utter insensibility.

Where drinking is carried on to excess even those nervous centres which control breathing and the circulation,—the last ones of all to be influenced—are affected and death ensues. While this does not happen very often it has happened often enough to show the poisonous, deadly effect of liquor beyond a doubt. Heed, therefore, the words of wisdom: “Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it sparkleth in the cup, when it goeth down smoothly: At the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange things and thy heart shall utter perverse things.” (Prov. xxiii. 31—33.)

You will understand from this that the effects of the regular and habitual use of even a little liquor of any kind, must be injurious to the body. The brain becomes clouded and

unfit for its work, the muscles become weak and unsteady and unable to do their duty, while the nervous system is disturbed and finally wrecked by the continuous excitement. “Know ye not,” says the apostle, “that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? And ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body.” (I. Cor. vi. 19. 20.)

In addition to these disastrous effects of strong drink upon the body,—which in themselves should be a solemn warning to all,—its use will bring on other evil results as certainly as night follows day. Think of the money that is foolishly spent in this manner! Only a small fraction of the amount spent for liquor every year in your own city or county would maintain a whole family for many years! And they who spend this money get no return for it but that of a moment’s pleasure! If the money thus spent could be given to some charitable purpose how much good could be accomplished by it! And instead, there is not a particle of good done, only harm! Think of the shame and misery which strong drink has brought into thousands of homes which could have been bright and happy! Think of the suffering

which drunken sons and husbands have caused their families who might have been well fed and clothed! Think of the crimes, the unutterable wickedness and evil that has been committed under the influence of liquor, and the thousands of graves and prison cells that have been filled by drunkards! Think of that most appalling fact of all which the apostle so plainly and unmistakably declares: “Drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God!” (I. Cor. vi. 10; Gal. v. 21; Eph. v. 5; Prov. xxiii. 29. 30.) Think of all this and then try to think, if you can, that the use of strong drink is not a curse to our people and our country!

* * *

When a boy gets out of school—sometimes even before—he begins to count himself a man and often attempts to prove it by openly using tobacco. Now I earnestly hope that all the boys who read this book will in course of time grow up to be real men, not only in size or age but especially in character. But don't try to prove that you are on the way to real manhood by using tobacco. If you do, there are some chances that you will not grow up to be a real man in the best sense of the word after all.

The tobacco plant contains a very strong poison called nicotine. If you should swallow the amount of nicotine contained in one or two cigars it would cause your death. In smoking or chewing some of the nicotine is absorbed, and while most physicians agree that a full grown healthy man may use tobacco moderately without evil results, nearly everybody will also agree that the use of tobacco does but very little good. Most people who are habitual users of tobacco, wish they were not, while I have heard of none who were sorry they had never used tobacco.

All who use tobacco in their youth, the period of physical and mental growth, injure their health seriously, perhaps permanently. Even a moderate use at this time tends to hinder the development of mind and body and makes you unfit for the real duties of life. Especially is this true of the cigarette habit, to which so many boys are addicted. So dangerous is this habit to body, mind and soul, that a cigarette smoker is regarded with suspicion almost everywhere. In recent years the largest business enterprises of the country, railroad, telegraph and insurance companies, and business houses of every kind, have refused to em-

ploy cigarette smokers, while the United States Army and Navy, as well as many schools, colleges and universities are closed against them also.

Remember that anything which will injure your health or make you in any way unfit for the duties of life, is a crime against yourself and a sin against your God, which you and those who love you must surely suffer for.

* * *

One of the amusements that seem to have a special charm for young people is that of dancing and, no doubt, it appeals especially to those who have a natural fondness for music and social pleasures.

Dancing is undoubtedly of Eastern origin. All Eastern people naturally display their feelings in some outward manner; in trouble or distress they rend their clothes, or tear the hair, loudly bewailing their misfortune, while the dance and song are their expressions of happiness. Many of these practices we find mentioned in the Bible, among them that of dancing. (Judges xxi. 19—21; Jer. iii. 4.) Many of the heathen nations of the East had religious dances which were a part of their worship, and even in Israel this seems to have been a well

known custom. Thus, in Ex. xv. 20. 21, where Miriam and the women of Israel danced before the Lord to praise Him for His great deliverance, and II. Sam. vi. 14, where David danced for joy before Jehovah because the ark of the covenant was brought back to Jerusalem. Ps. cl. 4 also mentions the dance as a mode of praising Jehovah.

From the East the practice found its way into Europe and America. The original, natural and spontaneous character was lost, however, and it became simply an amusement indulged in for pleasure only. Because of this there are certain dangers to a true Christian life about the practice with which all of you ought to be acquainted.

Several years ago I had a little talk with some young people on the subject and asked them in the course of my remarks:

“Now, if there must be dancing, as it appears, why do not the young gentlemen and the young ladies dance by themselves? You could then enjoy the same music, the same congenial society and still avoid the dangers of the practice.”

“O, that wouldn't be any fun,” was the answer.

So after all it is not the music nor the society that makes dancing a much-sought pleasure, but something very different. If there were not the personal touch and contact and the consequent excitement then there would be no “fun” in it!

Did you ever look at the matter that way, my dear young reader?

Think of it, girls. I know none of you would in your own home permit the familiarities commonly indulged in at dancing parties. Why then should they be permitted in public? “They all do it,” you say? Does that make a wrong thing right? You will be happier and your maidenhood will be sweeter and more charming to all whose opinion is of any value if you do not permit even the slightest familiarity with your person on any occasion.

Very often the company one meets at dancing parties is objectionable. You cannot refuse an introduction to any one present without causing hard feelings, and every lady is expected to accept any gentleman present as her partner for at least one dance, although she may ignore him the next day. While on the dancing floor a lady is, therefore, really required to bestow her friendship on any one

present and to be amiable to people whom she would not recognize, much less speak to, anywhere else. In this way pure and innocent girls are often required to dance with vulgar and immoral men and many ruined lives prove the truth of the apostle's saying: "Evil companionship corrupt good morals." (I. Cor. xv. 33.)

Let your standard of friendship and morality ever be high and above suspicion and do not for a moment lower it for the sake of amusements which at best are silly and ridiculous. If you would keep your character unstained and remain pure in heart, then avoid being "unequally yoked with unbelievers; for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness?" (II. Cor. vi. 14.)

One very good way to know the pleasures that are safe and those that are dangerous is to ask yourself the question: "Could Jesus accompany me if He were living in the flesh?" If you can honestly imagine that He could, then well and good; if you can afterward honestly imagine that He would agree with all you said or did there, so much the better. If your conscience protests, however, if you feel that He would very likely not go with you, then

you may be sure that it is no place for you, for there is danger and you had better stay away—unless you want to separate yourself from your best Friend and stray away from the tender care of the Good Shepherd. .

* * *

Recently some large, rosy-checked apples were presented to me upon a waiter. I took one and cut it in two. But alas! instead of the pleasure I had anticipated, I found that the apple was totally unfit to eat. Not only was the core rotten through and through, but the greater part of the meat also and that which was left, was already in the first stages of decay. According to outward appearances the apple seemed perfect, but within there was all the hideousness of worm-eaten rottenness that would soon have become apparent in all its disgusting ugliness.

Many a boy's and girl's life would appear like this apple if people could look at the heart. From some wicked companion they have learned to enjoy impure thoughts and by and by to do unclean deeds, until this kind of evil has taken hold of them like a foul disease and they are slaves to secret sins. No doubt you have met such children in school or elsewhere;

perhaps you have been tempted to do likewise; perhaps you have even fallen a victim to such evil habits.

In all this there is deadly poison for a true Christian life. No one can enjoy “the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes,” (I. John ii. 16.) and love Christ also, and those who persist in things of this nature must lose for this world and the one to come the peace and happiness that comes of a pure Christian life. All such thoughts and practices weaken the will and the mind, destroy health and make one unfit for the work of life. For a time these evil desires and habits may remain unnoticed but their ruinous effects are there, nevertheless, and will sooner or later, if persisted in, bring shame and disgrace upon the evil-doer.

Turn your back, therefore, upon everything impure or unclean. Put away all thoughts of it. Hate it with all your might. Shun every companion who tries to lead you into evil ways and turn your eyes from every sight that leads into temptation.

Ask God to forgive the sins of the past and to “create a clean heart and renew a right spirit” within you. Pray for divine help in the hour of temptation, that you may remain faith-

ful to the promise you have given. Think only of that which is good and beautiful. Remember the all-seeing eye of God from whom nothing can be hidden. Avoid idleness; it is the mother of all wickedness. Have something useful to do all the time and do it with all your heart.

Then you will be on the way to pure happiness and joy and will learn to know and value the peace of God which passeth all understanding. (Phil. iv. 7.)



Take Courage!

From all this you will see that there are many temptations that will come to you as you take your place in the world. You will have to meet them, and the manner in which you do meet them will show whether you have received Christ and are rooted and builded up in Him. You will have to prove by the conduct of your life that you really desire to walk in Christ.

To do this you must have courage. I know a great many boys and girls who would do very well if they could always be in good Christian company. But left to themselves they are afraid that some one might not like it if they said or did what they know to be right, possibly others might even laugh at them, and so they give up a little, and then a little more, until they do not even try to do what is right.

You will find again and again, however, that even those who do not agree with you, will think more of you if they see you faithful and earnest in trying to do your duty. Be sure you are right and then go ahead, no matter who or how many are against you. With every temp-

tation you conquer, your strength will grow, so that the next one will always be more easily overcome. By and by you will gain experience and wisdom, you will become more firmly rooted in Christ and builded up in Him, so that at last it will become a sort of second nature for you to walk in Him also.



“Abide With Us.”



O Jesus, I have promised to serve Thee to the end;
Be Thou forever near me, my Master and my
Friend!

I shall not fear the battle if Thou art by my side,
Nor wander from the pathway if Thou wilt be my
Guide.

O let me feel Thee near me! the world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle, the tempting sounds I
hear;

My foes are ever near me, around me and within,
But, Jesus, draw Thou nearer and shield my soul
from sin!

O let me hear Thee speaking in accents clear and
still,

Above the storms of passion, the murmurs of
self-will!

O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control,
O speak and make me listen, Thou Guardian of my
soul!

O Jesu., Thou hast promised to all who follow
Thee,

That where Thou art in glory there shall Thy
servant be;

And, Jesus, I have promised to serve Thee to the
end,

O give me grace to follow, my Master and my
Friend!

Ev. Hymnal,

The Helping Hand.

You would never be able to walk in Christ by your own efforts alone, however. You need help, and your heavenly Father knows no greater joy than that of helping His children. He knows the weakness of the human heart, He knows the powers of Darkness and Evil that are in the world, and He alone can help you conquer in the battles of life.

Don't forget Him, therefore. His kind and loving eye is always upon you. His strong arm is always outstretched to hold and guide you. Keep your eye fixed on Him. Keep your hand in His. Then your way will always be clear and you need never be afraid.

You may find God in His Word. There He is ever present and always ready to speak to you, if you will only listen. There you will find what you need most in all the different and varying situations of your life. There you may find comfort and peace in the days of sorrow and trouble and help and strength for the hour of temptation, while the days of joy and gladness become doubly precious if they are

blessed and hallowed by the Word of God. Read your Bible every day; make a habit of it, but not a habit only. Read it prayerfully. Think about what you have read. Commit to memory the passages that seem most beautiful and take them with you everywhere; they will be helpful and cheering in the duties of everyday life.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Do not forget the place where God's glory dwelleth. (Ps. xxvi. 6—8.) There you will find those who desire to walk with God. Every Sabbath you may learn again that you are not alone in a world of wickedness and that you may remain in touch with those who love righteousness. It will do you good to know this and the consciousness of a common cause with many church-goers, the songs of praise and prayer and the eternal voice of Truth will lift your soul beyond the things of this world into the pure atmosphere of the living God, so that you are strengthened and refreshed for the new week's work.

You need the Sabbath services. For the sake of your immortal soul, for the sake of your own peace and happiness: don't neglect them. The moment you do you are losing hold upon

your God, and the more you do so, the more will you be at the mercy of the world and its evil influences. Everything that tends to keep you out of church on the Sabbath is a danger to your eternal welfare. Be watchful. Where so much is at stake you cannot afford to be negligent. The spirit may be willing, but the flesh is weak, and you need the help of God and all your own strength of will and firmness of purpose to overcome the temptations in this direction.

I have often noticed that many boys and girls rarely, if ever, attend communion again after they have done so for the first time. Upon inquiring for the reason I have never obtained a definite answer, partly, I suppose, because those whom I asked did not themselves feel sure of the cause, partly, perhaps, because they did not feel able to express themselves clearly. At any rate it is clear that they do not feel the importance of the matter nor realize the blessings which a faithful use of the Sacrament may convey.

The bread and the wine are the visible signs of the body and blood of Christ, they stand for His life and death with all the sacred and

blessed meaning this implies. By eating the bread and drinking the wine you only show in the most convincing way possible your sincere faith that Christ has by “one sacrifice for sins forever” (Heb. x. 12.) taken away also those sins which you have just confessed, and such faith has the precious promise of forgiveness of sins, life and salvation.

Because we are liable to lose the consciousness of these priceless blessings by contact with the world and its trials and temptations, it is a precious privilege that we are enabled to reassure ourselves of their possession again and again. The oftener you attend communion, therefore, the stronger in faith you may grow and the closer may the bond of union become between you and your Savior.

While I would under no condition urge any one to attend communion who does not really desire to do so, there must be something wrong if you feel no desire to attend within a reasonable time, and it will be well to try and find out what it is. Don't put it off. The longer you do, the less you will care about it. Ask your pastor's advice. Tell him all about it. Be honest with yourself. Pray for light. Then the way will be clear.

Remember that your pastor is your true friend. He has as great an interest in your welfare as any one can have and would like to be on the most intimate terms with all of you. He is always ready and willing to help you all he can. Usually, however, he does not know where he can help you unless you tell him. Don't go out of his way as so many young people do, but give him your confidence. Call on him when your way does not appear clear to you. Tell him of your doubts, if you have any, or of any other difficulties you may have. It will do you good to talk about the matter and the talk itself is sure to be helpful to both of you.

Remain faithful to the Evangelical Church. This church is your spiritual mother. Through the church God speaks to you, through it you have been received into His Kingdom, in it you have learned to know His truth, by its work you may gain everlasting life. Other churches have the truth also, each in its own peculiar way, but none is quite as good for *you* as your own Evangelical Church.

By entering another church you will gain nothing that your own church cannot offer and

you may lose much if not all that it has given you. Be faithful in the use of those blessings and privileges you may enjoy through your church and you will not want anything better. He that is faithful in a few things shall be set over many things (Matth. xxv. 21) and enter into the joy of the Lord.

And now “Abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of,” (II. Tim. iii. 14.) then you will receive “the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.” (I. Pet. i. 9.) “Be faithful unto death and the crown of life will be given you.” (Rev. ii. 10.)



The End of Faith.

Who are these like stars appearing,
These before God's throne who stand?
Each a golden crown is wearing;
Who are all this glorious band?
Hallelujah! hark, they sing,
Praising loud their heavenly King.

These are they who have contended
For their Savior's honor long,
Wrestling on till life was ended,
Following not the sinful throng;
These, who well the fight sustained,
Triumph through the Lamb have gained.

Who are these of dazzling brightness,
These in God's own truth arrayed,
Clad in robes of purest whiteness,
Robes whose lustre ne'er shall fade,
Ne'er be touched by times rude hand?
Whence comes all this glorious band?

These are they who watched and waited,
Offering up to Christ their will;
Soul and body consecrated,
Day and night they serve Him still:
Now in God's most holy place
Blest they stand before His face.

Lo, the Lamb Himself now feeds them
On Mount Zion's pastures fair;
From His central throne He leads them
By the living fountains there;
They are crowned with glory's wreath
Who are faithful unto death.

Ev. Hymnal.



The Confirmation Vow.

I believe in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and promise by the help of God to renounce the sinfulness of the world and my own heart, to live according to the teachings of the Word of God and to remain faithful to the Evangelical Church. Amen.



The Confessional.

Almighty God, my Father through Jesus Christ, my Savior and Redeemer! I humbly acknowledge before Thee my many sins and transgressions by thought, word and deed by which I have deserved Thy wrath and punishment. I sincerely repent of them all and beseech Thee to be merciful and grant to me pardon and forgiveness of sins for the sake of Thy Son, my Lord and Savior. There is none other comfort or trust than Thy grace which aboundeth above my guilt and I pray Thee to strengthen me anew with Thy Holy Spirit that I may lead a new and better life to Thine honor and glory. Amen.



Prayer before Communion.

I praise Thee, my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, that Thou hast entered this world of sin and sorrow to seek and to save that which is lost. From Thine infinite love and mercy Thou hast through Thy own blood entered once for all into the holy place and obtained eternal redemption. Thou hast ordained the sacrament of Thy Last Supper as a memorial of Thy glorious work of salvation, that the bond of union between Thee and the faithful may always grow stronger. I praise Thee and glorify Thy name for the blessed privilege I enjoy, although I must acknowledge myself unworthy of Thy loving kindness. For, O Lord, I have sinned against Thee again and again. I have listened to the voice of the world more than unto Thy voice, and, in the blindness of my heart and the folly of youth, sinned against heaven and in Thy sight so that I am not worthy to be called Thy child. Sanctify me, therefore, I pray Thee, in body and soul, by Thy Spirit, that I may partake worthily of Thy precious gift. Fill my heart with true repentance, sincere faith and a fervent love, and grant Thy divine blessing, as I now desire to strengthen my com-

munion with Thee in Thy Holy Sacrament. Send me Thy light and truth and let me feel Thy presence and the peace and joy it brings, that I may be more and more consecrated to Thee for the time of my earthly pilgrimage and at last see Thee face to face in Thy heavenly kingdom and dwell with Thee and all Thy saints for evermore. Amen.



Prayer after Communion.

Bless Jehovah, O my soul;
And all that is within me, bless His holy name.
Bless Jehovah, O my soul,
And forget not all His benefits:
Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;
Who healeth all thy diseases;
Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;
Who crowneth thee with loving kindness and
tender mercies.

Jehovah is merciful and gracious,
Slow to anger and abundant in loving kindness.
He hath not dealt with us after our sins,
Nor rewarded us after our iniquities.
As far as the east is from the west,
So far hath He removed our transgressions
Like as a father pitieth his children, [from us.
So Jehovah pitieth them that fear Him.
Bless Jehovah, all ye His works,
In all places of His dominion:
Bless Jehovah, O my soul.

I praise Thy holy name, my Lord and Savior, that Thou hast strengthened my faith and love by Thy holy Sacrament. Help me to cherish the remembrance of Thy goodness, that it may be a power for good within me. Create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit within me and help me to continue steadfastly in prayer, that I may not only desire to do Thy will, but do it cheerfully and with all my heart.

Hold me by Thy right hand and guide me with Thy counsel and finally receive me into Thine everlasting glory. Amen.



Morning Prayer.

Heavenly Father, I praise Thy goodness and mercy that Thou hast watched over me and kept me through the darkness of the night and brought me to see the light of another morning. I thank Thee for the manifold blessings with which Thou hast surrounded me, though I am not worthy of Thy love and kindness. Help me to appreciate more and more Thy good and perfect gifts, that they may bring me nearer to Thee.

I thank Thee especially for the new opportunities of the day. Give me grace to perform

my duties and occupations faithfully, remembering that Thou seest and knowest all things. Help me to realize that each day brings me nearer to the day of Thy just judgment, when Thou wilt ask an accounting of what each one has done, whether it be good or bad.

Be Thou with me wherever I go and guide me in Thy ways. Help me to conquer the temptations that beset my pathway and give me strength to walk with Thee. Be Thou also near unto all Thy children, especially to those who are dear unto me. Let them feel the peace and comfort of Thy presence and make us all more and more one with Thee.

Accept, I pray Thee, this tribute of my devotion and hear me in Thy great mercy. I ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.



Evening Prayer.

O gracious God and Father, I come to Thee again with praise and thanksgiving. Thou hast been with me this day and guided me to its close in safety and peace, and I thank Thee for all Thy goodness and mercy. Forgive all my sins and help me to avoid all that is not pleas-

ing in Thy sight, that I may grow in the grace and knowledge of my Lord and Savior.

Be with me through the night that is coming on. Let me rest in peace under Thy protection and care, Thou, who dost neither sleep nor slumber. Wilt Thou also extend Thy fatherly care to all my dear ones; keep them from harm and danger, and let goodness and mercy follow them.

Be Thou near unto all Thy children, especially those who are in affliction and sorrow, or in trouble of any kind. Let them feel Thy presence and realize Thy love, even though their way is dark, and deliver them according to Thy promise. And Thine O Lord, shall be the power and the glory from everlasting to everlasting. Amen.



Grace before Meals.

“The eyes of all wait for Thee, O Lord, and Thou givest them their food in due season; Thou openest Thy hand and satisfiest the desires of every living thing.” Amen.

(Ps. cxlv. 15.)

We thank Thee, our heavenly Father, for Thy gifts which Thou hast set before us, and we pray Thee to make us cheerful and contented in their enjoyment. Amen.

O come, our Lord and Savior,
And be our guest to-day,
That each may have a blessing
From Thee to take away. Amen.



Grace after Meals.

“Give thanks unto the Lord and bless His name, for He is good and His loving kindness endureth forever.” Amen. (Ps. c. 5.)

We thank Thee, our Lord and Father, that Thou hast satisfied our desires out of Thy eternal goodness, and pray Thee to help us live a life of gratitude and service to Thee. Amen.

Hear our thanks and praises
For Thy blessings, Lord;
Help us always cherish
The Bread of life, Thy Word. Amen.

A Prayer in Sickness or Suffering.

Almighty God, my heavenly Father! According to Thy promise: "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify me," I call upon Thee in this my hour of distress and suffering, and pray Thee that Thou wouldst not forsake me. Thy will be done. Give me patience to bear the pains of the body without murmuring. Having received good things at Thy hands, I will accept the days of suffering likewise. I know Thou art loving and gracious and wilt impose no greater burden than I can bear.

If this illness is not unto death, then, O Lord, help me to regain my health and well-being according to Thy will and purpose, and let me praise the wonders of Thy power and loving kindness that I may live in fear of Thee and be an instrument of Thy honor and glory.

Should it, however, please Thee in Thy unsearchable wisdom to call me away from this world, then also, my God and Father, Thy will be done. Forgive all my sins for Jesus' sake and prepare me for death and eternity, that I may enter Thy heavenly mansions, where earthly pain and sorrow is succeeded by surpassing heavenly glory.

My God, here I am, do as Thou wilt; let me fully understand Thy counsel. Let this illness be as a fire to take away the impurities of my life, as a call to patience and endurance, and as a test of my faith and love. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou so disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance."

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the billows near me roll,
While the tempest still is high;
Hide me, O my Savior, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last." Amen.





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